



12 JUN, 2023

## Leave no one behind in the pursuit of education

The Star, Malaysia



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THE recent revelation that nearly 15,000 students did not take their SPM examination raises concerns about the implications for these individuals, their families, and the wider community ("SPM: 14,858 candidates did not sit for exam, Education Ministry to find out why", *Sunday Star*, June 11; online at [bit.ly/star\\_nospm](https://bit.ly/star_nospm)).

It is imperative to explore the potential consequences of this situation and highlight the importance of taking immediate action to ensure these students are not consigned to a life of hardship and limited opportunities.

Various factors may have contributed to their choice, such as a

perceived lack of suitability for SPM, financial constraints, societal pressures, or the disruption of the Covid-19 pandemic. While it is crucial to understand the reasons behind these students' decision, what matters is how we can support them to overcome their challenges.

To prevent these students from being left behind, the Education Ministry (MOE) must take proactive measures. The MOE possesses a database that holds the records of all registered students, so it can identify and reach out to these students to offer assistance.

The priority should be to help them chart alternative paths to

success. Education should not be solely measured by certificates and scrolls; instead, it should empower individuals to lead successful lives free from poverty, and contribute positively to society. Therefore, immediate efforts must be made to provide these students with opportunities to acquire skills, engage in vocational training, or pursue alternative educational pathways that align with their aspirations and potential.

Recognising that eradicating extreme poverty is a national goal, it is crucial for all stakeholders, including the government, private sector, civil society, and

communities, to work together. By pooling resources and expertise, we can ensure that these individuals are given the support they need to regain their footing and move towards a prosperous future.

Leaving no one behind in the pursuit of education is a moral imperative. Let us stand together and ensure that no one is left behind, for a truly inclusive and prosperous Malaysia.

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### SUMMARIES

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